

Andrew Breitbart tweet before death adds fuel to online speculation of D.C. sex-trafficking ring

Newspapers, pundits blast charges from 'dark crevices of the Web'



Conservative media icon Andrew Breitbart. (Associated Press) ** FILE ** more >

By Douglas Ernst - *The Washington Times* - Monday, November 28, 2016

Andrew Breitbart is making news even in death.

Social media speculation of a sex-trafficking ring in the nation's capital has burned up social media sites for weeks. Complicating matters is Hillary Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta's decision not to comment on anything WikiLeaks-related for months.

Explosive claims by Internet sleuths, which were prompted after reading stolen documents belonging to Mr. Podesta, have been derided as “viciously phony” by Fox News’ Howard Kurtz. A tweet by Mr. Breitbart shortly before his March 1, 2012, death is now being cited by online researchers as proof that they are onto something big.

SEE ALSO: D.C. power-player tied to Podesta blasts ‘insane’ Reddit sleuthing on sex-trafficking ring

“How prog-guru John Podesta isn’t household name as world class underage sex slave op cover-upperer defending unspeakable dregs escapes me,” Mr. Breitbart wrote Feb. 4, 2011.

The conservative icon’s death at age 43 was attributed to “heart failure.”

Knowledge of the late conservative’s tweet sent Google searches for “Andrew Breitbart” skyrocketing Sunday night as news spread to members of Twitter, Reddit, GAB, Voat and other social media platforms.

“One of America’s best and most respected independent journalists at the time; he is making a very bold claim about John Podesta — back then — based on his own research,” former Huffington Post contributor David Seaman wrote on GAB Sunday night. “This is years before WikiLeaks came out.”

Mr. Seaman and others claim Mr. Podesta and his associates spoke in code in numerous documents released by WikiLeaks. One example includes a Feb. 9, 2014, email with the subject line “Did you leave a handkerchief.”

“Hi John, The realtor found a handkerchief (I think it has a map that seems pizza-related. Is it yorus [sic]?” a woman identified as Susaner asked. “They can send it if you want.”

Such wording led online sleuths to investigate Mr. Podesta’s connections with D.C. power-player James Alefantis, owner of Comet Ping Pong. The Democrat fundraiser and pizza place owner, who is mentioned in 16 different WikiLeaks documents, had a public Instagram account that featured sexual innuendo and bizarre images of children.

Accounts for Comet Ping Pong employees, which are now set to private, featured nudity involving naked men with slices of pizza strategically placed over their genitals.

"From this insane, fabricated conspiracy theory, we've come under constant assault," Mr. Alefantis, 42, told The New York Times on Nov. 21. "I've done nothing for days but try to clean this up and protect my staff and friends from being terrorized. [...] It's endless."

The editorial board of The Washington Post also lambasted social media sleuths on Nov. 25 in an op-ed titled "'Pizzagate' shows how fake news hurts real people."

"The allegations against Comet Ping Pong, reported by the New York Times, are absurd on their face and detached from any gossamer thread of fact," the newspaper wrote. "They took root in the dark crevices of the Web and took flight thanks to social media platforms, whose witless 'who, us?' posture in the face of misinformation and outright lunacy is a civic embarrassment. ..."

"Like 93 percent of Washingtonians, the restaurateur happened to support Ms. Clinton for president; he has some prominent Democratic friends, past and present," the Post continued. "Mr. Alefantis's name surfaced in leaked email from Mr. Podesta's account, published by WikiLeaks, in which the two men discussed holding a Clinton fundraiser. As far as anyone knows, there is no more logic than that as to why Mr. Alefantis and his restaurant became targets. The First Amendment is a bulwark of democracy but provides no protection for defamatory allegations published in knowing disregard for the truth. Mr. Alefantis is more than entitled to sue for defamation and libel, if he can find the purveyors of the garbage heaved his way."

**AndrewBreitbart**

@AndrewBreitbart

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